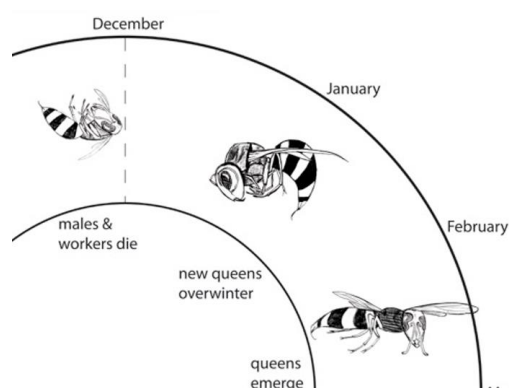


### ASIAN GIANT HORNET STAKEHOLDER UPDATE #21-01 – FEBRUARY 10, 2021

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### ASIAN GIANT HORNET LIFE CYCLE UPDATE



In their native range, all Asian giant hornet colonies follow a specific life cycle. As winter approaches, the new virgin queens and males emerge from the nest and mate not far from the nest. Many queens will not successfully mate. Both mated and unmated queens will disperse to overwinter, finding a sheltered area or place in the soil. Males and workers will die over the winter.

Mated queens will emerge in the spring and attempt to found a nest; unmated queens do not establish functioning nests.

### WSDA UPDATE

WSDA met with USDA partners over the last two weeks. The meetings evaluated the Asian giant hornet program from the 2020 season, and planned changes to the upcoming 2021 season including the upcoming citizen scientist program. Residents of Washington will be encouraged to trap again, however some of the instructions will be modified. WSDA greatly appreciates all that Washington residents did in 2020, and looks forward to working with the public again this year. We will provide updates as things develop for 2021. Stay tuned!

### USDA-APHIS HOSTED AN ASIAN GIANT HORNET MEETING

During the weeks of January 18 and 25, the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) hosted a virtual meeting to discuss the 2020 Asian giant hornet (AGH; *Vespa mandarinia*) trapping season and plan for the 2021 season. Washington State Department

of Agriculture (WSDA) and APHIS reviewed the accomplishments and lessons learned during 2020, which included the discovery and eradication of the first AGH nest found within the United States. The group also discussed the survey plans, trap types, attractants, and tracking devices that the team will use during the 2021 season. The multiday meeting concluded with presentations from researchers in APHIS, WSDA, the USDA's Agriculture Research Service, and academia, as well as a discussion of future research needs to support AGH eradication.

## NEW DETECTIONS

There have been no new confirmed sightings of Asian giant hornets reported to WSDA.

At this time in their lifecycle, new queens are overwintering and males and workers have died.

However, it is still important to be on the lookout since, dead or alive AGH reports are helpful. Dead hornets can provide detection points for the upcoming trapping season and aid in future research as well.



## WSDA'S 2020 ASIAN GIANT HORNET RESPONSE – A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES

Watch [this video](#) to hear from WSDA's team that responded to the Asian giant hornet situation in Washington State in 2020! You'll get a behind-the-scenes look at what it was like for us responding to the pest itself as well as working with the public and media! Thurston community media will be locally airing the video on channel 22.

Saturday 2/13	9:00 am
Monday 2/15	2:30 pm
Thursday 2/18	5:30 pm
Saturday 2/20	4:30 pm
Tuesday 2/23	10:30 am
Friday 2/26	12:30 pm
Sunday 2/28	9:00 pm
Wednesday 3/03	2:00 pm
Thursday 3/04	8:30 am



## ASIAN GIANT HORNET PILOT PROGRAM

The recently passed federal stimulus package has relief funds related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but also includes a wide array of activities. The bill's Sec. 508 "Murder Hornet Eradication Pilot Program" authorized \$20 million (\$4 million annually between 2021 and 2025) for a pilot program to eradicate the Asian giant hornet. The bill stipulates that the money go to U.S. Fish & Wildlife, directing that agency to work with relevant federal agencies on this pilot program. **However, at this time, congress has not appropriated the funds for the pilot.**

WSDA normally works with the USDA when seeking federal assistance to combat an invasive species, like the Asian giant hornet. Since the new federal legislation sends the funds instead to U.S. Fish & Wildlife, WSDA will need to meet with federal partners to learn how the funding process will now work, should the funds be allocated.

## TOP WSU RESEARCH STORY FOR 2020

Asian giant hornet was the top WSU research story in 2020. WSU estimates that the study *Scientists predict potential spread, habitat of invasive Asian giant hornet*, has led to over 3.52 billion views. You can view the article, along with the other top stories, [here](#).

## MORE THAN HORNETS – BLOG

For decades, WSDA Pest Program, with cooperation and participation from the public, has protected the quality of life for all Washingtonians by ensuring that crops and our environment remain free from invasive pests, including the Asian giant hornet. The program monitors for over 130 pests yearly.

### Last but not least - Asian giant hornets

2020 was the first year that we monitored for Asian giant hornets, after confirming the first detection in the country in December 2019. We had to rapidly develop plans for trapping, tracking, and eradication in the spring in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Asian giant hornets garnered national attention when they were dubbed "murder hornets" by the media in May of 2020. Suddenly, the eyes of the world were on our staff and our work.

But the notoriety also had a benefit - millions of people were educated about Asian giant hornets and thousands stepped up to help by either reporting suspected sightings or placing traps on their property and submitting their catches for 17 weeks or more.

Thanks to the combined efforts of WSDA and citizen scientist trapping, we were able to trap, tag, and track an Asian giant hornet back to its nest last October - finding and eradicating the first-ever Asian giant hornet nest in the United States. Of the 31 specimens that were reported or trapped, half were detected by the public. We literally could not have done it without you.

WSDA's pest program recently released a video summarizing the program's work in 2020 and is currently meeting with national and international partners to plan trapping for 2021. While the plans are still in development, we do know that citizen scientist trapping and reporting will continue to play a significant role in the work to prevent Asian giant hornets from establishing in the U.S.



Collaboration between state and local organizations, and private citizens have helped to keep pests in check for decades, this not only protects our crops but the environment and human health. Check out [this blog](#) to read a year end summary on trapping for Asian giant hornet in 2020 and some other pests WSDA monitors.

## TVW DOCUMENTARY - NEST ZERO

TVW recently produced a short documentary tracing the arrival of Asian giant hornets in North America. They filmed several people working to eradicate Asian giant hornets including WSDA staff. You can view the documentary on

YouTube [here](#).



## UPDATE FROM CANADA

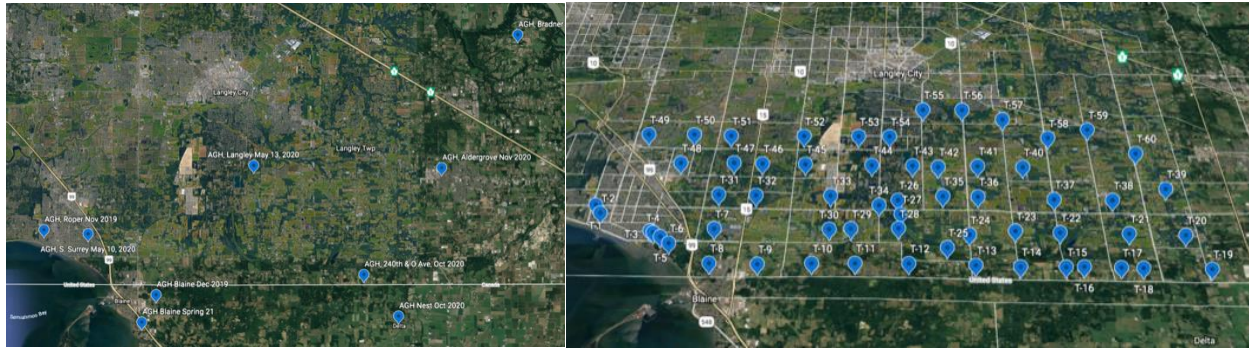
British Columbia has no new reports. They continue to encourage citizens to report Asian giant hornets. They will be monitoring for AGH again this season. Additionally they hope to have a ground crew to "look underneath every bush" when credible reports of sightings come in from particular

areas.

Paul van Westendorp with BC Ministry of Agriculture also provided this summary of their 2020 trapping efforts. They included two maps,

One with 6 confirmed AGH detections in 2020 (left), and a map of Asian giant hornet traps, showing distribution along the Canada-US border from White Rock in the west to Aldergrove in the East (right).

All six specimens were collected by the public, no specimens were found in traps.



## STAY CONNECTED

WSDA is dedicated to working with the public to provide information on Asian giant hornets. WSDA continues to provide informational webinars to beekeeping associations, gardening clubs, libraries and museums, sovereign nations and many other stakeholders. Contact [hornets@agr.wa.gov](mailto:hornets@agr.wa.gov), if your organization is interested in a presentation to learn more about Asian giant hornets.

- [View past news releases, blogs, and Pest Program updates](#) about Asian giant hornet.
- Join the [Asian giant hornet Facebook group](#).
- Join the [Pest Program email listserv](#).
- Follow WSDA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [Twitter](#).